



## ***Cole Camp Middle School***

***District: Cole Camp R-1***

***Enrollment: 210***

***Grade Range: 6-8***



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***Cole Camp Middle School strives to meet the intellectual needs of all students while creating a learning environment where all students and adults are valued for their abilities and input. We are committed to providing an excellent program of instruction, fostering lifelong learners, and “Aiming for Excellence!”***

Cole Camp R-I Middle School, located in Cole Camp, Missouri, serves a mostly rural population that has, over the past few years, experienced an influx of a more diverse population. The community, located near two major lake areas, has drawn people from the Kansas City area and has received a number of immigrants from the Ukraine.

### ***Embracing the Middle School Concept***

Fully embracing the middle school concept has allowed Cole Camp Middle School to strive toward accomplishing its vision of “Aiming for Excellence.” During the past three years, the school has moved from the old junior high concept of a “mini high school,” to a true middle school. Faculty and staff have created a culture that is reflective of the needs of the middle level student and to the middle school concept of a caring atmosphere in which students feel comfortable and welcome. Teachers have worked to articulate curriculum across the content areas and have also incorporated reading and writing into all components of the curriculum. Classrooms are filled with the hands-on, performance-based activities that research has found to be most effective for teaching middle school students to apply what they have learned. Varying forms of assessments require students to demonstrate many levels of thinking, allowing teachers to meet the needs of all students at their levels.

The school has also added electives and eliminated a full block of study hall time, adding instead an exploratory class. The exploratory class allows students to work on character education and develop effective study skills, as well as to explore Spanish and German. Both of these languages have important ties to the community in general as more native Spanish speaking residents have moved to the area in recent years and the original settlers of the area were of German heritage.

### ***“BEST PRACTICE IN ACTION...”***

- ***Teacher Training*** – All certified staff members are trained in reading across the curriculum by a STARR teacher from the Central RPDC.
- ***LINK Program*** – Parents of seventh grade students are given one teacher to contact with concerns about their children.
- ***After Hours Program*** – Sixth grade parents may attend programs which provide ideas and suggestions on communicating with their adolescent children.

## ***Increasing Co-curricular Opportunities***

Cole Camp Middle School has expanded its co-curricular offerings to extend learning time and opportunities for students on both the academic and the social level. In addition to the math and speech clubs that were already in place in the district, the middle school has added science and chess clubs for its students. The band program has added a marching band and pep band, and the vocal music program has added a sixth grade chorus. Student council offers students many opportunities to grow and learn about civic duty and character issues. Students may participate in athletic programs including basketball, volleyball, and soccer, as well. Collectively, these activities offer students a chance to become involved, to create relationships that will follow them throughout their academic careers, and to initiate leadership skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

### ***“WORDS OF WISDOM”***

- **“The implementation of a uniform grade reporting program has made it easier for teachers to stay on top of grade figures and be proactive when they see a problem.”**
- **“The open, proactive approach to communication with parents has been a highly successful part of our program and has led to many parents expressing appreciation to the team.”**
- **“...the best change begins with those who are closest to the problem.”**

## ***Finding Strength in Teamwork***

Cole Camp Middle School faculty and staff cite their willingness to work together for the benefit of all students as their greatest strength. Since implementing the middle school concept, “teamwork” has become a key element of the school’s success. The building principal, along with the staff, has redefined the school’s leadership structure from one with a single individual in a leadership position to one of team leadership. The principal now serves as an instructional leader, providing resources necessary to ensure quality education and allowing teachers to be the experts in the classroom. With the “teaming” concept firmly in place, teachers have common planning time to work together, integrate curriculum, discuss student progress, and communicate with parents. Professional development has become a team effort, as well, with teachers focusing on the middle school concept and research-based learning and assessment strategies.

*Through fully incorporating the middle school concept, Cole Camp Middle School is providing students with opportunities to explore the opportunities they will have in high school and beyond, all in an atmosphere where middle level students feel valued and welcome.*